daily if, as is so often the case, the surmounting building has three doorways.

One of the most prominent features of a Chinese building is the roof. It is possible that the platform is designed to preserve a balance and to keep the roof from seeming out of proportion. Sometimes roofs are double or even triple, the eaves of the second and the third being set back from the one below, and each upper one being raised above the one underneath by a wall or a kind of clerestory with supporting pillars. They are usually tiled, although thatch may be employed in poorer houses. In many instances, especially in such structures as temples and palaces, the tiles are covered with a colored glaze. No one who has seen them can forget the yellow roofs of the imperial palaces of Peiping or the blue of the Temple of Heaven. Often the main lines of the roofs are emphasized by tiles curiously shaped in conventional geometric patterns or in the form of dragons or of other animals mythical or real. Sometimes the decorations are in bronze or iron. Often the crown of the roofs is mounted by especially elaborate decorations of designs of varying history and origin. The eaves are usually prominent and terminated by ornate tiles. The curved eaves are familiar to all who know anything at all about Chinese buildings. The origin of the curve is uncertain. The surviving representations of Han buildings do not have it, and it seems not to have entered until the first millennium of our era. It may have been adopted to afford relief from the severely straight lines which the heavy projecting roof would otherwise present, or it may have been devised to let in more light.

Not much is made of the gable ends, although

these are often decorated. Most Chinese buildings are elongated rectangles and are intended to be viewed from the side rather than the end. It is the broad fagade in which the door or doors are placed and from which the sweep of the roof can be seen to best advantage.

Much color is employed, and generally, even to the uninitiated Westerner, with pleasing effect. When it is said baldly that the roofs of some buildings are yellow and their walls red, and that the timbers are ornamented with elaborate designs in bright and variegated colors, to one who has never seen them the results might be thought rather bizarre. When actually viewed, however, they usually seem eminently fitting and in excellent taste.